



MEN IN CARING PROFESSIONS IN THE EU AN OVERVIEW

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ICMEO, September 3rd 2020

Outline

- What is the gender make-up of care professions in the EU?
- Why is care so gendered and assigned to women?
- What are the approaches taken to change this?

What do we mean by caring professions?



- Personal Care workers
 - Child Care Workers and Teachers' Aides
 - Personal Care Workers in Health Services



- Cleaner and helpers
 - Domestic, hotel and office cleaners and helpers
 - Vehicle, window, laundry and other hand cleaning workers

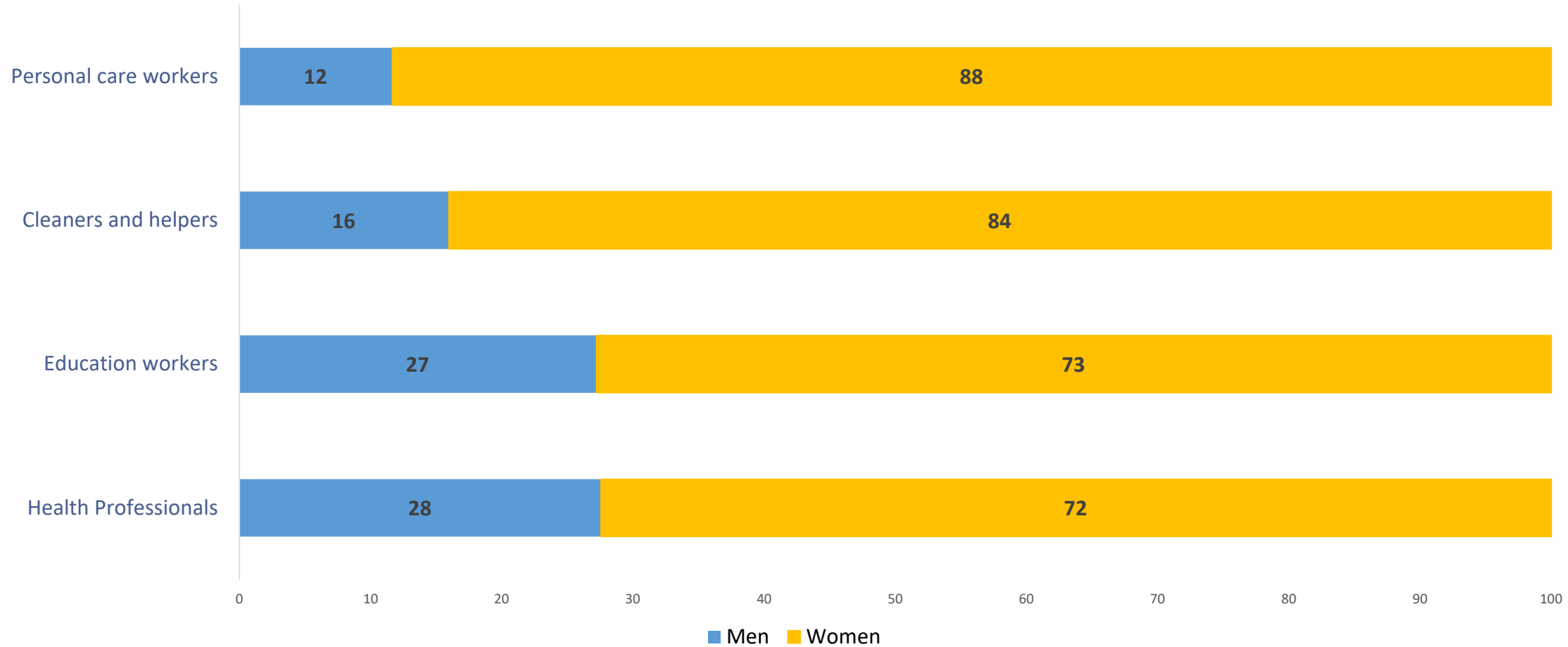


- Health professionals
 - Medical doctors
 - Nursing and midwifery professionals
 - Traditional and complementary medicine professionals
 - Paramedical practitioners
 - Veterinarians
 - Other health professionals

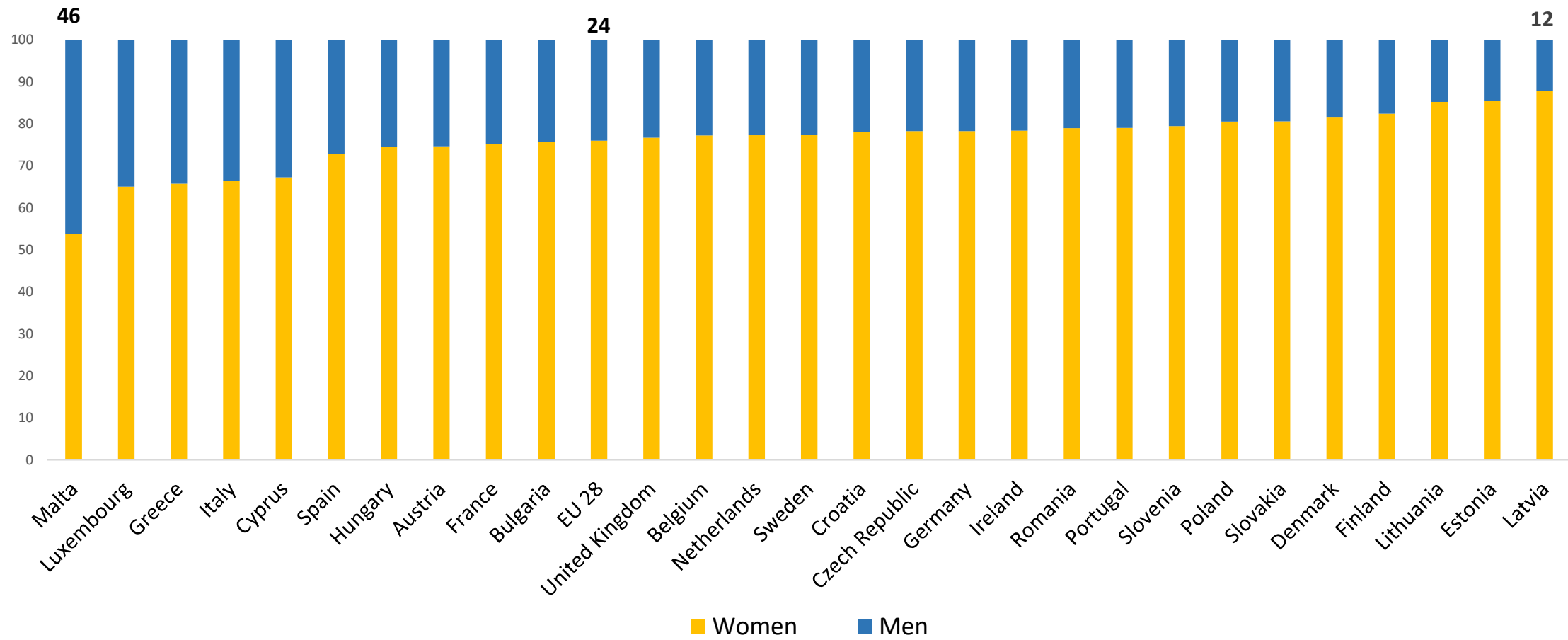


- Education professionals

Women and men working in caring professions, EU 28, 2018, %

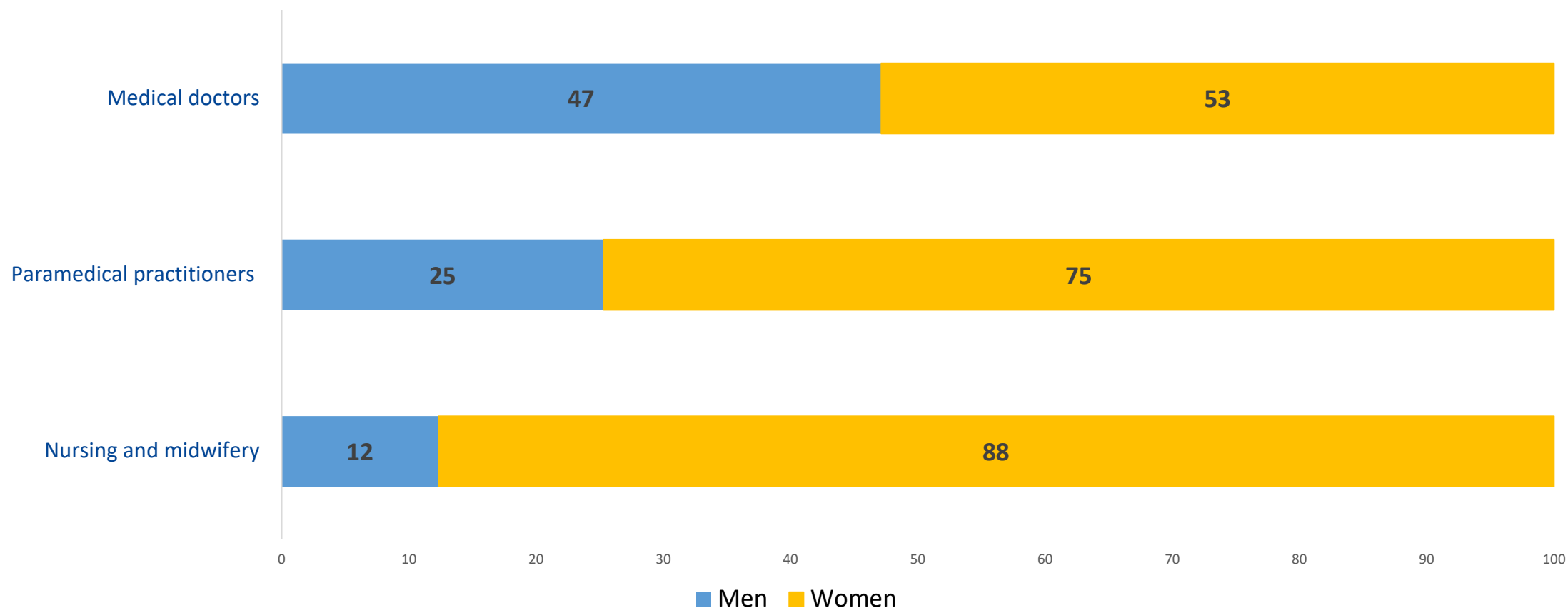


Women and men working in human health, EU 28, 2018, %



Women and men working in human health professions, EU 28, 2018, %

Overall, 24 % of human health professionals in the EU are men



Why is care so gendered and assigned to women ?

- Classical economics: labour is productive if goods and services exchanged on the market if not, leisure
- Feminists economist pointed it creates a dichotomy and hierarchies:
 - Men= production, paid work and public spaces-outside world
 - Women=reproduction, unpaid work and private spaces
 - Argued renewal and care of human life necessary to any production of goods and services
 - Enduring association between care and unpaid work lead to low social and financial value to caring occupations.
 - Underrepresentation of men both cause and consequence of low recognition of care work.

Why are men deterred from choosing care professions?

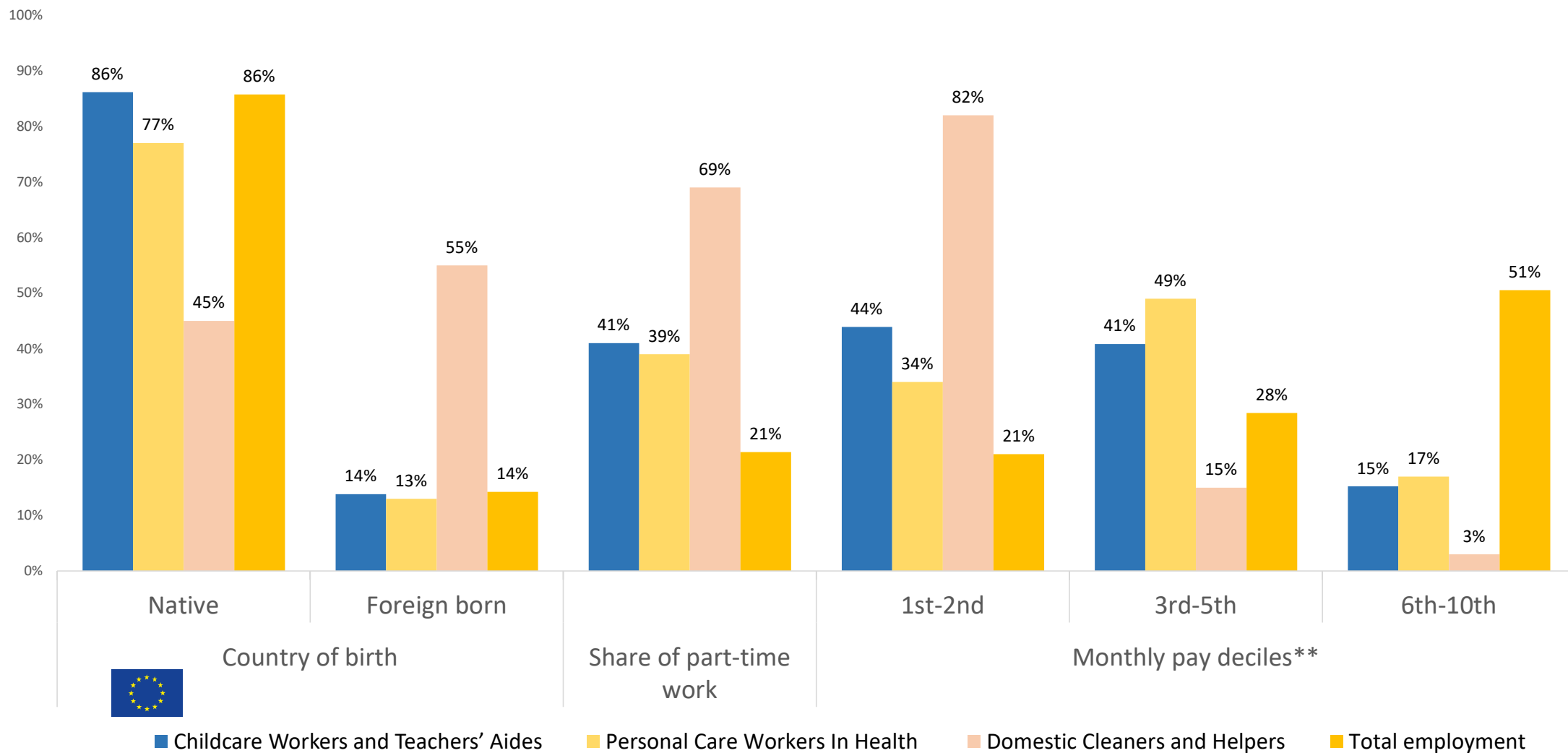
- Gender norms around care
 - Early socialisation of girls to care for others
 - Tasks traditionally performed by women for free
- Gender norms around masculinity such as
 - Providing is caring
 - Emphasising social status
 - Rationality and science
- Cultural representations of caring professions as selfless, nurturing, ...
- Low economic recognition
 - Cut back public spending
 - Low wages
 - Limited training and career advancement
- Poor working conditions
 - Part-time work
 - Temporary contracts
 - Atypical work hours
 - Occupational health issues

Masculinities, care and identities, Nail Hanlon, page 30

“Care is socially constructed as feminine within both the private and public sphere because women comprise the majority of society’s carers and because caring is defined as feminine.

Despite the fact that caring is sometimes idealized and valorized in itself, to be a carer is to be materially and symbolically subordinated.”

Characteristics of caring professions in which men are most underrepresented



What are policies doing to change this?

- Gender segregation often neglected aspect of gender equality policies
- Greater focus on women in Science than on men in Caring
- COVID 19 shed light on essential role of care and low societal value given to it.
- Greater investments and salary increases announced.

What could be done more?

- Increase salaries, benefits and career progression
- Promote decent working conditions and economic independence at all levels of caring professions.
- Promote positive gender norms where care for others is a human trait.



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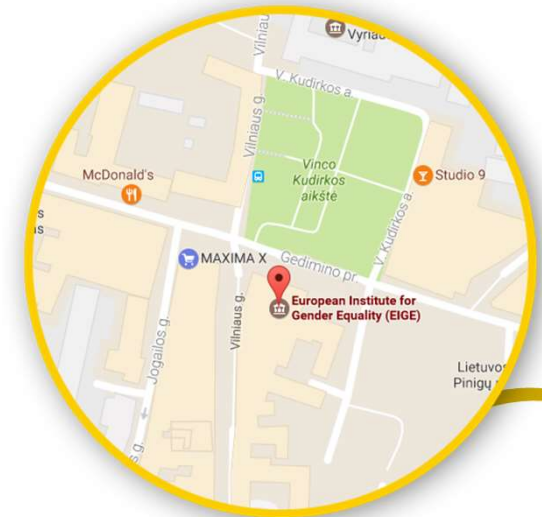
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come in for a chat!

